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you going by plane, train, or car? We will be attentive to the roads, rails, and airports for the same reasons. How long will you be away? Will the church be affected by your absence beyond today?

We need to know whether to re-assign tasks. In the context of keeping assemblies of the church sensible, Paul wrote, *“Let all things be done decently and in order”* (1st Corinthians 14:40); therefore, we assign roles in advance, and meet immediately prior to the assembly to confirm these assignments. If you are on the roster to present announcements, word a prayer, lead songs, serve at the Lord’s Table, or preach the exhortation, you must be present! If you have volunteered to clean the meeting house or to prepare the Lord’s Supper, you must be present!

If you anticipate being absent, then arrange with another member to see the task is fulfilled. If your absence is sudden, at least let the church know as soon as practical so it is less of a scramble figuring out who, on an impromptu basis, must cover for you, including who will be pulling double duties. The body grows up when *“every part does its share”* (Ephesians 4:16), not when half do nothing and the other half does twice as much.

We need your encouragement. There is a basic reason we come together to worship. *“Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching”* (Hebrews 10:24-25). Assembling allows us the opportunity to exhort one another, consider one another, stir up one another to love, and good works. We need to hear our fellow Christians *“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”* (Ephesians 5:19). We need to hear our fellow Christians *“say ‘Amen’ at [our] giving of thanks”* (1st Corinthians 14:16). Since collective worship is meant for encouragement, widespread absence has the opposite effect. Members who withhold their Amens, withhold their singing, and withhold their mutual exhortation in general do a great deal to discourage the faithful.

You would not neglect your family in the same way. If your household expects you home from work at a certain time for dinner every night, you would inform them in advance if anything kept you from being there. Otherwise, you are simply a poor husband and father or a poor wife and mother or a poor son or daughter. In the church, we are

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WHAT A PREACHER CAN AND CANNOT DO FOR YOU

Chadwick Brewer

He can teach, but not learn for you, give evidence, but cannot believe for you, exhort, but not make you attend, reprove, but not make your heart close to God in worship, stir up, but not make you love your neighbor, encourage, but not receive encouragement for you, be zealous, but not make you zealous, instruct, but not make you exercise your faith, lecture, but not make you train yourself in righteousness, rebuke, but not make you change.

Don’t blame your lack of faith, zeal, brotherly love, attendance, or righteousness on the preacher. If he fails at his part, rebuke him for his failings. But take ownership and rebuke yourself for your failings.

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“members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19), so we need the communication expected in a family.

You would not neglect your job in the same way. You would not remain employed very long if you just did not show up and did not tell the boss why because *“It is required in stewards that one be found faithful”* (1st Corinthians 4:2). Three absences from work without an explanation is usually considered job abandonment. How many unexplained absences does it take to constitute forsaking the church?

Communication is too easy to ignore. The frequency with which Christians are told to *“Greet one another”* (Romans 16:16) certainly indicates an expectation that communication ought to be open and regular between members of the church. With the availability of calling, texting, emailing, Facebook Messenger, and posting to the church’s private Facebook group, there are abundant ways to let brethren know an absence cannot be avoided. Unless everyone in your house is unconscious, or a disaster caused a simultaneous power outage and cellular outage, or you are stranded in a cellular dead spot, not communicating was deliberate.

Christians should be the most dependable people. Doing what we do *“as to the Lord”* should mean it is done *“heartily”* (Colossians 3:23), but if absence from church and noncommunication with church members is taken into consideration, then our people are anything but hearty. Deeper commitment is needed. Reliability must come to characterize all in the church.

"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY

Men's & Ladies' Studies @ 6:20 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN ANY TRESPASS... RESTORE SUCH A ONE"

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN"

PROVERBS 25:11

"We often treat Jesus the way Saul treated David. We want him to slay giants and sing evil spirits away, but we don't want him to be king."

– A.W. Tozer

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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NO-CALL/NO-SHOW CHRISTIANS

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Too many Christians absent themselves from the assemblies without notifying brethren. This habit is troubling for several reasons.

We need to know whether to delay the assembly. Concerning proper observance of the Lord's Supper, Paul commanded, *"Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another"* (1st Corinthians 11:28). If members have informed the church of their expected absence, then brethren may call the assembly to order promptly and include relevant news in the announcements. However, if members neglect to inform brethren, the church may be unnecessarily delayed, waiting for no reason.

We need to know what to pray for. Brethren ought to *"pray for one another"* (James 5:16) and those prayers are more personal and more meaningful to all involved if they are at least somewhat specific.

Are we praying for healing? If so, is it a common, temporary ailment? How many in the house are sick and how many are caring for the sick? Is it a major injury or disease? Do we need to plan a meal list or arrange transportation to doctor's appointments?

Are we praying for safety while traveling? If so, where is your destination? If we see news about the weather, natural disasters, or violence happening there, do we need to help you get home? Are – Continued on page 2 –

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